A Modular Society?

A modular society is one which feels and functions more like a machine than as a community. In such a society, without realizing it, each individual, in essence, is seen as a replaceable part rather than as a sentient being worthy of regard. This happens because living in a modular society leads to deep-seeded, subconscious, modular-mindedness, a process for which the price is a loss in one's genuine spirituality, especially for us as Muslims, and particularly for us as Shia Ithna Ashari.

As Shia, we have many ahadith (narrations) to which we turn for guidance, all which come to us from Prophet Mohammed ص and his Holy Household ع.

Of those ahadith, one in particular depicts a scenario that is quite horrific, but which is, at the same time, also very sobering. That hadith is attributed to our 8th Imam ع, Ali al-Ridha bin Musa al-Kazem ع, and it is as follows:

لو بقى من الدنيا إلَّا يوم واحد لطوَّل الله عزَّ وجلَّ ذلك اليوم حتى يخرج (القائم من ال محمد ص) فيملأ الأرض عدلاً كما ملئت جوراً

Translation:
If there was just one day left for the earth to exist, Allah, the Almighty and the Glorious, will stretch that day out until such a time that the emergence of the Saviour from the descendants of Prophet Mohammed ص happens, as he ع is the one who will ensure the earth is filled with as much justice as it had been filled with tyranny.[1]

To appreciate what our Imam ع is saying, we first need to think about what "...just one more day left for the earth to exist..." actually means.

Luckily, we live in a scientific era where, among other things, our curiosity about the universe has already allowed our brilliant scientific minds a look into such matters, and, after having done many calculations, our scientists have arrived at a number that tells us when that "...one day left for the earth to exist..." will be.

Because of this, we also know that the nuclear fusion of hydrogen atoms in the sun's core, ie. the phenomenon by which the heat and light produced by the sun helps to support life on our planet, is also what will eventually cause our sun to turn into a type of star called a Red Giant.

As a Red Giant star, from what science tells us, our sun will grow so much that it will eat up the orbits of the planets Mercury and Venus, as well as the two planets themselves.

In fact, our sun will become so large that the distance from its outermost layer to our planet earth will become much, much smaller than it is right now, and because of it our planet will be baked and burned so much that all the oceans will vaporize and dry up, and all life that is found here now, will be killed off. But, to get to that exact point in time, ie. the time of the death of our planet, it will take 5 billion years.[2]

Because we know it is impossible for a typical human being to live to be a billion-years-old, to us, at this moment in time, this may not look like anything to worry about, but, if we, as Muslims/Shias, take a step back and look at this situation in terms of the religious development that we are supposed to go through, there cannot be a more horrific, and yet sobering hadith than this that we will ever come across.

This is because, essentially, in his hadith, our 8th Imam عis saying that, considering how serious the occultation of our 12th ع is, ie. because in being separated from him ع we are left depending on our own whims and whiles to figure our religion out for ourselves, and also, perhaps, to depend on our clergy, too, for help in this regard, that all the teachings Allah س has ever sent to mankind by way of His own "hand-picked," pure, and infallible messengers, prophets, and massom Imams ع, has fallen on deaf ears; that mankind, on his own, will never be able to fully understand and do what God *actually* wants to see man do.

"There has to be a point where man makes sense of religion, even if left on his own, because how long can man stay ignorant of God's wishes, anyway?," you may ask.

Well, if we look closely at what our 8th Imam ع says about how, even if there was "...just one day left for the earth to exist...," that Allah, the Almighty and the Glorious, "...will stretch that day out..," and then realize that, in scientific terms, this means this could be *at least 5-billion years, or more*, then we will have the answer to our question.

Horrific. Horrific. Horrific.

How horrific a situation is it when, despite making so many scientific and technological advances which are (seemingly) indicators of the advancement and progress of our species, we have evolved, in the perspective of the infallible mind of our Imam ع, into nothing but beings who can potentially remain eternally deaf, dumb, and blind to what God wants us to know?

In other words, as a species, how delinquent are we that, if allowed to spawn for eternity, we will never bother to pick up on the fact that God exists, that He sent us a game plan (ie. religion/doctrine), and that the easiest way to do and get things done right (ie. per God's will) is to listen to and follow the infallible leader (ie. the 12th Imam ع, God's last emissary (hujja) to mankind) whom God Himself appointed? This is the sobering part.

---

[1] Kamaal al-Deen wa Tamam al-Nama by Sheik Sadooq كمال الدين وتمام النعمة شيخ الصدوق p. 347

[2] http://curious.astro.cornell.edu/about-us/51-our-solar-system/the-sun/birth-death-and-evolution-of-the-sun/167-how-do-you-calculate-the-lifetime-of-the-sun-advanced

Not to be long-winded, but the problem that our 8th Imam ع points out, in terms of the direction in which we are headed, seems to be happening to us right now because, without realizing it, we have allowed ourselves to become modular beings living in a modular society, which is what has led to us becoming desensitized to the desperate need we have to not have anyone else other than our 12th Imam ع lead our lives, per God's wishes, and per the way He س wants to see things get done.

But, you may be wondering, how can our society be deemed a modular[3] society, and how would it have become this way?

A modular society is a society which, at the end of the day-no matter who lives or dies, or whatever new or old epidemics spread or cease, or whatever natural or man-made disasters happen-it just "keeps on truckin'" through all: the good, the bad, and the ugly.

For example, in many workplaces, particularly ones involving "front line," or customer services work, it is usually deemed that such a job requires a particular set of skills. For this reason, such positions can be thought of as being modular.

This means, if the the current worker, employee, or associate employed in this position quits or is fired, or perhaps is transferred to another position, someone else is able to take over, with minimal harm, if any at all, being caused to the functionality of that society, corporation, or business, etc.

And, interestingly enough, we see this same principle of modularity applies equally to low-paying jobs eg. cashier, customer service agent, or clerk of some type, as well as to high-paying jobs eg. president of a country or corporation, a CEO of some kind, a nurse or doctor, etc., and, it also applies in countries where monarchial rule is still found, ie. even to the position of the king of a country: if the current individual goes away, someone else takes their place.

Because of the basic logic behind modularity, we can confidently say that each and every position in society, whether big or small, is *necessarily* modular, and at some point there has to be a successor, replacement, or substitute who *has to* take over, so that society can keep moving forward.

And it doesn't matter if the society or civilization we look at is from the distant past, or one from an as of yet undetermined future, because the basic element, that of modularity, is what is needed to ensure success for a society/civilization.

And that is the point. Our present-day lifestyle has trained us to think and to be modular.

Then, we have to wonder: what effect does such a lifestyle and training have on a modular society's *spirituality*? How do beings living in a modular way view and approach *religion*?

Answer: in that *same modular-minded way* (of course)!

So, with all that we have said so far in mind, in regards to our religion, no matter how many iterations of God's Wisdom we, as Muslims, believe there may have been to it, and also notwithstanding our belief that God sent 124,000 (infallible) prophets, and, in addition to that, as Shias, our belief that there were also 14 infallible members of Prophet Mohammed ص and his Holy Household ع, all delivering the same pure, unadulterated, impeccable "vision of God for mankind's benefit," have we, since the start of the Occultation of our 12th Imam ع, *watered-down* all those teachings by incorporating them into our modular-mindedness?

Well, in light of our 8th Imam ع's hadith, *yes, we have*.

Due to our modular modus operandi, once the last official deputy of our 12th Imam ع, Muhammad al-Samarri RA[4], passed away, and, per the direct orders of our 12th Imam ع, did not delegate or designate any successor after his passing, we, as Muslims, and as Shias in particular, resorted to imposing our modular-mindedness on the prophetic teachings, ie. about God's Wisdom, that were passed down to us.

What an insult to us, the prophet ص, and to God!

In the absence of an infallibly-minded leader, our 12th Imam ع, do we truly think that spreading ideologies such as taqlid or emulation of a bona fide non-masoom, ie. as a "substitute imam," can ever compensate for what God has already declared, ie. that only a categorically infallible Imam is to preach His message and lead His servants?

Thus, in light of our discussion on a modular society, we see clearly the pompous proposition proposed by the nonsensical notion of taqlid (ie. emulation, as found in the "Osooli" sect of Shiaism).

Per our other discussion entitled "An Infallible Mind,"[5] we noted that Allah س created the universe with nuances that only an infallible mind can pick up on, and that the same Allah س has also created the Holy Quran with just as many nuances, too, which, again, only an infallible mind can pick up on.

---

[3] https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modularity

[4] https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_Deputies

[5] https://archive.org/search.php?query=creator%3A%22SMH+Razvi%22&sort=-downloads

This means, since the death of the last officially appointed deputy of our 12th Imam ع, because, as sincere as our intentions may have been in subjugating our religious teachings, the very ones brought to us by Prophet Mohammed ص and his pure and Holy Household ع, to our modular-mindedness, we have, in fact, actually hindered our spiritual development, ie. our development on a religious level, which is supposed to have happened to us by this point in time; So much so, in fact, that, per our 8th Imam ع's narration, we can continue endlessly on this present trajectory for, possibly, *well over 5 billion years*-without an end in sight!

This is because our modular-mindedness provides us a *false* sense of security in the thought that, since we have managed to generate criteria, at least in Osooli ideology, which *renders down* even the Marja al-Taqlid's role, ie. the role of the Spiritual Leader of Society, to a *modular* one, so that if a vacancy opens up for the role of a Marja's (eg. due to the death of the previous one), "the next guy" can simply take his place, and lead society.

But hold on just a second, because there is a very shocking point that needs to be noted here before we can continue on: The notion of the modularity of a Marja's role tires to falsely imply that the role of a Masoom Imam ع is also modular, such that, if one Imam ع is martyred, the next Imam can take his ع place.

This role, that of an Infallible Imam, may seem modular, but, for us living in the reign of the 12th Imam ع, it is no longer so.

It may have made sense that, after the Holy Prophet ص, Amir al-Momineen ع was the 1st Imam ع, and that, in succession, there would have followed our 2nd, and then our 3rd Imams ع, and so on; However, based on the Holy Prophet ص's own narration, there are *no more* Infallible Imams after our 12th and last Imam ع.

The point here is: modularity *does not* apply to the role of our Infallible 12th Imam ع because there is *no one* who can replace him ع!

Getting back to the point about how Osooliism's notion of taqlid has hindered our spiritual development, we can look at an example from our fiqh, ie. our religious practices, and see how innovation via edicts from *fallible* spiritual leaders, in addition to modular-mindedness, have significantly impacted our Islamic development.

If we compare any contemporary (Osooli) edicts to those of the teachings of the past, we find that an entire chapter, in the name of progress, has been eliminated altogether from our spiritual thoughts and minds: slavery.

Although the Holy Quran still contains verses about slaves and slavery, perplexingly, *despite* the obvious notion that a Muslim's beliefs and practices, especially those of the Shias who claim to be adherents of the actual teachings of Prophet Mohammed ص and his Holy Household ع, should be *consistent* with the teachings of the Holy Quran, we find that the Osoolis have eliminated any and all discussions on how slaves and slavery, in our present-day world, should be dealt with.

Why? Doesn't doing so leave out a part of God's Wisdom regarding the need and/or necessity for slaves and slavery, regardless of the era in which Muslims, or Shias in particular, live?

Or can we, as Muslims, or Shias in particular, confidently assert either that God, on this one point alone, "went too far," or that, due to the evolution of mankind's ethics and values, God's Wisdom seems "nonsensical" and therefore "inadmissible" to us?

Just for a moment consider this: in secular schooling found throughout the western world, and particularly at the university level, many disciplines require, as part of the foundational courses that a student has to study, that they touch upon and examine the ideas involved in slaves and slavery.

The western countries, although slavery is outlawed and against the law there, still see the didactic academic value in examining and exploring everything about those notions, including the horrible parts of it, which have been etched into time, and in the shamefulness of human history.

So, why do Muslims, Osoolis in particular, not regard God's Wisdom in such matters with the same reverence?

Is that which God dictates so devoid of academic and didactic value that modular-minded (fallible) men deem it *beneath* their dignity to warrant study?

In contrast to the (Shia) teachings of the past, and as a consequence of such blatant disregard on the part of Osooli scholars and leaders for the didactic and academic nature of God's Wisdom, a very clear example of hinderance to spiritual development in present-day (Osooli) Shias becomes apparent. This example has to do with something very basic: proper pronunciation during recitation of one's daily prayers.

In the edicts of the past[6], it explicitly mentions that, should the *master's* accent or pronunciation of Arabic be below the standard of his *slave*, then that master is required to let that slave lead the prayer, while he, the master himself, prays behind him. No exemptions. No exceptions.

How's that for a punch in one's "pride," eh?

"Well, what's the big deal in that?" you may wonder. Lots!

---

[6] see Timeless Static Jurisprudential Rulings chapter on slavery in https://archive.org/search.php?query=creator%3A%22SMH+Razvi%22&sort=-downloads

If, at least in the pre-covid-19 days, you found yourself on a holy pilgrimage to the Sacred Shrines and spots in Iran, you would likely find yourself praying behind a Persian Prayer Leader. Of course, since he is Persian, his Arabic accent would not likely be Arabic in quality.

And, so, if you happen to have a proper (Arabic) articulation, you would, per the jurisprudential rulings of the past, find yourself having to correct that prayer leader's shortfalls, and to reiterate the verses he has compromised, as needed, according to your own *proper* aptitude, for yourself, in order for your prayer to be valid. As a side note, you would not, and could not, qualify to lead that prayer without first receiving formal training, nonetheless, you would still be obligated to do the "patching-up." No exemptions. No exceptions.

The point here is: in disposing of God's Wisdom about slaves and slavery, the Osooli Leaders have promoted a slacking of regard where God's desire to hear *proper* pronunciation is presented, and thereby hindered the trajectory of the development that God otherwise wanted to see take place, as is deducible from jurisprudential rulings.

Although there are many more discrepancies Osooli *modular-mindedness* has allowed, and worse, introduced, into what God otherwise wants to see done, ie. in His س religion, one very significant such discrepancy is in that which they have allowed to wash over their sensibilities in terms of allowing the *commandeering* of the post of our *Infallible* Imam ع, instead, with the substitution of a *fallible* leader, the Wiliat al-Faqhi proposition.

In accordance with the jurisprudential sensibilities of the past, nothing less than an *Infallibly-minded* leader ع, ie. the 12th Imam ع, esp. for our time and purposes, is acceptable in terms of, for example: Sanctioning a Holy War, Legitimizing Friday Prayers, Spending/Allocating Sahm ul-Imam Khums (ie. the Shia version of 10% Tithe), Sanctioning Legal (ie. Islamicly warranted) Punishments, Distributing the Spoils of War and Allocating Lands, and Determining the Rate of Tribute Tax Due by Protected non-Muslims.

The problem these standards-which are set by God, the Almighty-present to mankind results in the religion *stalling*, ie. becoming stopped and unable to function fully, and going opposite in the way it is supposed to,ie. *per Allah's point of view*, because we are left without the rightful leader at the helm.

Once again, the problem, in terms of our argument on modularity, is that the ease that modular-mindedness brings into the way a society functions, ie. *from mankind's point of view*, in this case, becomes *the worst possible deception*.

This is because Shia Islam, when based in modular-mindedness, ie. when it allows for the (false) possibility that a fallible replacement can do the job of an Infallible Imam ع, *downplays* the immense role and functions of our Infallible 12th Imam ع, and creates the counterintuitive notion that our religion has not just "stopped in its tracks," making it seem as if it can still function normally, *without* the explicit need for our Infallibly-minded 12th Imam ع.

But, if we give in to such unorthodox (ie. Osooli) ideologies, and treat God's Glorified Wisdom just like we would anything else, it allows for our fallible modular-mindedness to be *appeased*, and *falsely* reassures us, as per all other non-Islamic notions, that "just about anyone" can do the job of our Infallibly-minded 12th Imam ع, so that, in a way, "everything is okay," when, in fact, it *is not*.

And this horrific type of thinking will continue to remain the way it is now, reducing our mindset to that of, essentially, zombie Muslims, *unless* we pay attention and take heed of the words of our Infallibly-minded 8th Imam ع:

لو بقى من الدنيا إلَّا يوم واحد لطوَّل الله عزَّ وجلَّ ذلك اليوم حتى يخرج (القائم من ال محمد ص) فيملأ الأرض عدلاً كما ملئت جوراً

Translation:
If there was just one day left for the earth to exist, Allah, the Almighty and the Glorious, will stretch that day out until such a time that the emergence of the Saviour from the descendants of Prophet Mohammed ص happens, for he ع will ensure the earth is filled with as much justice as it had been filled with tyranny.[7]

However, as a precaution, a bonus question that we should consider, in relation to the justice that our 12th Imam ع will bring, is: what is the tyranny that the world will have been filled with *prior* to his ع's return?

Imploring God, out of His love and respect for the Holy Prophet ص and his Holy Household ع, and for that of our 12th Imam ع in particular, to grant us all the pleasure of witnessing the emergence of our 12th Imam ع and the opportunity to taste, savour, and to live in a world filled with the justice that he ع will restore to it,

Your Brother in Faith,

SMH Razvi.
Feb. 4, 2021

PS: Certainly, parts of what has been mentioned in the above discussion may seem scandalous/pejorative to some individuals, but it is requested of them that they take what has been mentioned in those instances, and reconsider it in light of the horrific consequences that modular-mindedness guarantees. And, to be explicitly clear, let us not be modular-minded, especially where the pertinence and necessity of the return and leadership of our 12th Imam ع is concerned. May Allah س hasten his reappearance, ameen!

---

[7] Kamaal al-Deen wa Tamam al-Nama by Sheik Sadooq كمال الدين وتمام النعمة شيخ الصدوق p. 347